

Celebrating Curiosity with Utah’s Student Researchers

Undergraduate research conference attracts statewide participation

At 8:30 a.m. on Feb. 18, the Shepherd Union Building opened its doors to undergraduate researchers from across Utah. Eight hours and 270 presentations later, the Utah Conference on Undergraduate Research (UCUR) concluded successfully.

The annual UCUR event, which is hosted at a different university each year, provides an opportunity for undergraduates to present their work in a scholarly setting. This year’s participants came from all eight of Utah’s public institutions, as well as Brigham Young University and Westminster College. Approximately 70 WSU students presented projects.

The students represented many academic disciplines, from performing arts and biology to clinical laboratory sciences and psychology. Topics were presented during oral, poster and creative sessions and included “The Music of Numbers,” “The Empathy of Autism” and “Desert Dwellers of Escalante,” to name a few.

“UCUR allows students who are involved in undergraduate research to present at a professional meeting,” said Ryan Thomas, WSU’s associate provost and dean of undergraduate research. “It’s wonderful preparation for graduate school and/or employment, as the research is required to undergo a ‘juried’ process where only the best proposals are accepted.”

Up Next: NCUR
UCUR was the second in a series of three undergraduate research conferences hosted by WSU. The first was the Council on Undergraduate Research (CUR) National Conference in 2010. Next is the National Conference on Undergraduate Research (NCUR), March 29-31, 2012.

The upcoming three-day NCUR conference is the foremost undergraduate research conference in the United States and is expected to attract nearly 3,000 students and faculty from across the country.

“The selection of Weber State to host these conferences is an acknowledgement that WSU has taken a leadership role in undergraduate research,” said John Cavitt, director of the Office of Undergraduate Research.

Scott Wright agrees. Chair of the Department of Clinical Laboratory Sciences, he is serving as interim chair of the NCUR committee while Cavitt is on sabbatical leave.

“Having NCUR at Weber State makes a statement that the faculty and administration are strong supporters of undergraduate research,” Wright said. “Many faculty members across campus are committed to undergraduate research and have experienced the impact it has on students.”

As the conference approaches, the NCUR committee will ask for student and faculty volunteers. Wright encourages the campus community to get involved. He also asks that faculty encourage students to apply as presenters at NCUR.

“I have been to four NCUR conferences. Each time I have been amazed at the diversity and incredible caliber of the projects,” Wright said. “Hosting NCUR will be a tremendous opportunity for WSU students and faculty to attend and participate in the conference. Having 3,000 people see WSU firsthand is an excellent opportunity to showcase our beautiful campus, as well.”



History department chair **Susan Matt** and Peter Stearns, the provost of George Mason University, are the editors of a new book series on the history of emotions. The University of Illinois Press will publish the first volume, “Doing Emotions History,” in 2012. Matt also was featured recently in an article on *CNN.com* about the history of status goods in America.

English professor **Michael Wutz** contributed a chapter titled “Featherman’s Body Literature or, the Unbearable Lightness of Being,” in the book “Featherman’s Fictions: Innovation, Theory, Holocaust.” Wutz also presented “Featherman’s Fictions: Writing the Recombinant Life” at the annual Modern Language Association conference in January in Los Angeles.



Fulbright Scholars Take Their Research Around the Globe

Two Weber State University professors say their lives and lectures are richer after their recent experiences as Fulbright Scholars.

Visual Arts professor Suzanne Kanatsiz taught Global Contemporary Art and helped develop an art program at the United Arab Emirates University female campus. At the same time she had a solo exhibition of her work at a contemporary art gallery in Dubai.

Child and Family Studies professor Paul Schvaneveldt partnered with a faculty member at the University of Azuay to research, develop and implement a parenting-education program appropriate for Ecuador.

Because of their selection, the Institute of International Education recognized Weber State as one of only 23 master’s institutions nationwide to produce two or more Fulbright Scholars last year.

Kanatsiz said, with a father from Istanbul, Turkey, and a mother from the United States, she has always been interested in the blend of eastern and western art. She applied for a Fulbright Scholarship to deepen her knowledge of that contemporary art vocabulary. She also wanted to mentor and learn from Middle Eastern women. One thing she learned was that 80 percent of women in the country attend a university, compared to just 20 percent of the men.

Kanatsiz said her students had a zest for art and experimented freely. “They could not replicate God or Allah in a human form, but other than that, they were very open to drawing from observation and abstract imagery,” she said. “Islamic art has a long tradition in poetry, calligraphy and the decorative arts, and the students blended



Suzanne Kanatsiz
United Arab Emirates



Paul Schvaneveldt
Ecuador

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Internal Audit Gets New Director

Although Bryce Barker’s office in the Miller Administration Building overlooks the duck pond, he doesn’t always take time to enjoy the view. As Weber State University’s new executive director of Internal Audit, he is just too busy to look outside. Barker focuses instead on the papers organized pristinely on his desk.



Bryce Barker

Barker, who assumed his new role in December, is no stranger to Weber State. He earned his accounting degree here in 1985 and immediately started working in the accounting office. After two years he received a promotion to Internal Audit. Now with 22 years of experience in the department, including 10 years as assistant director, Barker is ready for increased responsibility.

“A little bit of excitement and a little bit of ‘all right, you’re the boss now’ anxiety,” was Barker’s initial reaction to the new assignment. And while he knew there would be more stress affiliated with the position — he now reports directly to President Ann Millner and the Board of Trustees — he was prepared for it.

The goal of Internal Audit is to help departments run smoothly by educating them about ways to safeguard the university’s resources and assets, while following university policies. To do that, Barker and his staff conduct financial, operational and compliance audits, as well as special reviews and investigations. They also provide training and consulting services.

FACULTY AND STAFF ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Dianna Abel, director of the Counseling and Psychological Services Center, Prasanna Reddy, director of Testing, Tutoring and Supplemental Instruction, and Jessica Hickmott, coordinator of Student Affairs Assessment, co-authored a chapter insert for an upcoming American College Personnel Association-sponsored assessment publication.

Performing arts professor **Tracy Callahan’s** production of “Under Construction,” by Charles Mee, got an invitation to the Kennedy Center’s American College Theater Festival’s Region VIII competition in Los Angeles. Callahan, accompanied by four other performing arts faculty members and 38 students, produced the play in LA in early February.



An Ecuadorian public elementary school was used to research parenting and family issues to create education programs.

those aesthetics beautifully. I was surprised at how open they were and how permissible all of that was.”

Although Kanatsiz was selected by the Fulbright committee to continue her work for an unprecedented second year, she returned to WSU to help build the 3-D art program. She said she has a renewed vigor for teaching, and her students have been amazed by images of the modern city of Dubai and of Arab women studying at a university. “My WSU students still conceptualize the Arabs as they are depicted in movies, dressed in rags and riding camels,” Kanatsiz said. “My images and stories dispel stereotypes, which is wonderful.”

Child and Family Studies professor Paul Schvaneveldt said dispelling stereotypes is the primary objective of the Fulbright program. “They want scholars to develop what they call mutual understanding, a sense we have a lot in common.”

Schvaneveldt returned from six months in Ecuador with a deepened reservoir of stories and examples for his classes, particularly his Latino Child and Family Development course.

As part of his scholarship, he conducted multiple focus groups and administered 1,500 surveys with Ecuadorian parents. He segmented three economic divisions: higher and middle-upper

income, lower income but not poor, and a third group of parents in extreme poverty.

“We found that when the parents were more permissive and indulgent in the upper- and middle-income group it was not helpful for their children, but for the other groups that permissive parenting style was actually positive because it showed they had enough energy, time and interest to be involved with their kids,” Schvaneveldt said.

He and a colleague from Ecuador helped teachers and school counselors develop a curriculum for a parenting-education program, which he then shared with hundreds of parents.

“I wanted to make sure I included people there because they have some parenting information but nothing that has really been developed for their culture,” he said. “Most of the information was developed in the United States, which doesn’t always translate across cultures.”

Schvaneveldt and Kanatsiz plan return trips to continue their scholarship.

They join a group of nine Fulbright Scholars from WSU since 1999, beginning with Schvaneveldt’s brother, WSU business professor Shane Schvaneveldt, who was selected for a Fulbright in Japan.



Students at the United Arab Emirates University female campus enjoy an art field trip.



STORYTELLING
FESTIVAL

getintoweber

Feb. 22-Feb 24: The 15th Annual **Storytelling Festival** honors William Shakespeare, and will feature three favorites who bear the bard’s name: Willy Claflin, Bill Harley and Bil Lepp. All the events are free except the festival dinner. For information and event times, visit community.weber.edu/storytelling.

Feb. 24: The Ralph Nye Lecture Series will present **Richard Richards**, former Republican National Committee chairman, noon, Wattis Business Building Smith Lecture Hall Room 206/207, free, 801-626-6063.

Feb. 25: The Center for Diversity & Unity will sponsor “**Let’s Talk:** A campus-wide conversation about cultural competence for us all,” 9:30-10:30 a.m., Shepherd Union Room 232, free, adriennegillespie@weber.edu.

Feb. 25: The Department of English and the Utah Council of Teachers of English will host the state-wide **Language Arts Festival**, 10 a.m.-3 p.m., Shepherd Union Ballrooms, free, 801-626-6623.

Feb. 28: WSU’s Department of History and the Weber Historical Society will feature author **Doug Robinson** speaking about his book “Larry H. Miller: Driven,” 7-9 p.m., Lindquist Alumni Center, 801-626-6709.

Mar. 4: Gov. Gary Herbert will present the keynote address at the Intermountain **Recycling & Sustainability Summit** on March 4 in the Shepherd Union Ballrooms. Register for the full day of classes and events at weber.edu/recycling. Cost is \$15 for preregistration and \$20 at the door.

Despite Barker’s pleasant demeanor and long tenure with WSU, he admits colleagues don’t always welcome his calls. “Do you have to?” “Are we in trouble?” “Is this a regularly scheduled audit?” are the most frequent responses, but he’s not fazed by them. He simply shrugs and says, “Oh, that’s fine. I’ve been an auditor long enough to know no one wants to be audited.”

Barker says he would probably have a similar response if the state called to inform him of an audit of his department. “I think I’d hang up the phone and ask, ‘Why me?’”

Despite the stresses of his job, Barker has no desire to leave WSU. He enjoys the people, working with departments, and even the audits. “Weber has been like a second home to me. I’ve gone to school here, graduated from here, and worked here for 24 years. Hopefully, I’ll retire from Weber.”

COLETTE M. WILLIAMSON,
UNIVERSITY COMMUNICATIONS

Welcome to WSU

Emily Caraballo, University Communications; **Veronica Guevara**, Communication; **Scott Hadzik**, Automotive Technology; **Brooke Hogensen**, Purchasing; **Danielle McKean**, Academic Support Centers – Programs; **Tom Peterson**, Athletics Administration and Support; **Carol Pfeil**, Dumke College of Health Professions; **Pieter van der Have**, Construction Management Technology; **Susan Young**, Sociology

On the Move/Promoted

Kristie Nielsen, Continuing Education; **Fernanda Phillips**, Admissions Office; **Margarita Schiffman**, Purchasing

Retired

Betty Tucker, Goddard School of Business & Economics

Source: Board of Trustees reports, January - February 2011

CAMPUS NEWS BRIEFS

Purchasing Reminder For Fuel

Using a university p-card to purchase gasoline for your personal vehicle is strictly prohibited.



- When driving your personal vehicle for university business, you will receive a maximum rate of 36 cents per mile issued as a reimbursement for gas, oil, wear and tear on your vehicle and insurance. Supervisors may establish lower mileage reimbursement rates within their departments.
- Gasoline may be purchased on a university p-card only when you have been

authorized to rent a vehicle while traveling on university business. Your p-card may be used to refuel the vehicle upon return to the rental agency. The gas charge must be documented and the receipt included in your travel-log envelope.

- When driving a university motor-pool vehicle on university business, a gas card will be provided for gasoline purchases at the time of vehicle checkout.

President Honors Outstanding Staff Members

Four Weber State employees received Presidential Outstanding Professional and Classified Staff awards from President Ann Millner, Jan. 19.

Classified Staff

Sarah Dawn Lowry was honored for her work as an office specialist in the

Technology Services Office, as well as for her contributions to the Education Focus Group for the Wildcat Tech Expo. Under her leadership, the Expo now offers 40 technology education sessions.

Accounting specialist **Patti Rasmussen** was recognized for her work on behalf of Weber State customers and students, and for creating process improvements for the monthly distribution of Crystal Reports and the

handling of unclaimed checks. One of her processes ensures that employees, vendors and students receive the money they are owed instead of allowing it to go to the state.

Professional Staff

As the media relations director for the university, **John Kowalewski** generates media coverage worth approximately \$500,000 per year. He not only gets to share positive stories,

but also is responsible for managing negative news stories that may arise in the media. Kowalewski also trains regularly for the role of public information officer in the event of a crisis on campus.

The enrollment director of the John B. Goddard School of Business & Economics, **Mark Stevenson**, has helped increase the number of students in the MBA program from 25 to 200. Stevenson serves as chair of

the WSU Graduate Council, overseeing the graduate fair and the creation of an online application process for graduate students as well as a common set of policies for all graduate programs.

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